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Macroeconomic policy questions: international trade and development

Sustainable development

Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 8 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to convey to you the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the recent decisions by the United States of America and the European Union to extend unilateral coercive economic measures against Syria for an additional year.

The United States administration and the European Union continue to ignore calls from within Syria and from the international community and United Nations entities, all of them stressing the urgent need to help Syrians to overcome their current troubles and strengthen their capacity to withstand the vicious terrorist onslaught against their lives, livelihoods, civilization, and social and cultural fabric. On 6 May 2015, the United States administration extended its unilateral coercive economic measures against Syria for an additional year. Those measures were initially imposed on Syria by the previous administration in 2003. They have targeted a number of vital sectors in Syria, including health, trade, banking, financial transactions, the private sector and the import of spare parts for passenger planes. The Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union also extended its

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unilateral coercive economic measures, which it imposed in 2011, for an additional year through 1 June 2016. The European measures also affect sectors that are vital for Syrians' needs and livelihoods and for development, the creation of decent jobs and maintenance of the country's economy. Those areas include oil, electricity, health, trade, banking and the private sector.

By continuing to adopt such illegal policies, the European Union and the United States have given clear proof of the following points:

1. They have no respect for the authority of the United Nations or its Charter. The latter prohibits such measures, which reach beyond the territorial borders of Member States to threaten the sovereignty of other States. They set no store by United Nations resolutions, in particular General Assembly resolution 68/200, which prohibits the imposition of such measures because of their negative impact on sustainable development and trade in the targeted States, and General Assembly resolution 69/180, which calls for the immediate cessation of any economic, financial or trade measures against developing States because they hinder the well-being and full enjoyment of human rights of the populations of those States, in particular women and children. The American and European sides also are also deliberately ignoring United Nations reports that have confirmed clearly the catastrophic impact of such measures on the livelihoods and well-being of Syrians and on their country's economy, including reports from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

2. American and European claims of wanting to help Syrians and provide for their humanitarian needs during the current crisis are contradicted by the actual facts, which demonstrate clearly that the American and European sides are deliberately inflaming the situation in Syria and exacerbating the deterioration of living conditions for Syrians. Their unilateral coercive economic measures are aimed at the very Syrian national capacities, resources and institutions that are required to meet the needs of citizens and implement humanitarian response plans and development plans. Indeed, the American and European measures go against United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution 2139 (2014). Those resolutions all urge stakeholders to support a humanitarian response for Syrians, instead of placing economic obstacles in their path or worsening their conditions in order to pressure them into making different choices.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns the American and European decisions to extend unilateral coercive economic measures against Syria for an additional year. It considers those measures to be a blatant effort to inflame the situation in Syria and cause the already difficult living conditions of the Syrian people to deteriorate even further. Those decisions reflect one aspect of the misguided approach being taken by the United States and Europe to the situation in Syria. Worst of all, the United States and the European countries have for many years denied the terrorist threat to Syria and the region. Some of those countries are implicated in sponsoring terrorism themselves; others merely turn a blind eye while regional governments do so. The Syrian Government calls on the free voices among the States members of the European Union to put a stop to the hostile approach of the Governments of France and Britain, which violates the resolutions of the General Assembly; Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 1624 (2005), 1989

(2011), 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015); international law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law; and European principles and values.

The Syrian Arab Republic stresses that any talk by the United States of America and the European Union about stepping up humanitarian assistance to Syrians is no more than empty rhetoric, and proof of public hypocrisy campaigns whose actual effect is to expose Syrians to all forms of danger. The Syrian Government holds those States responsible for the worsening humanitarian conditions in Syria, which stem from their ongoing sponsorship of armed terrorist groups and from certain European States' efforts to burnish the groups' image through various forms of direct and indirect support.

Notwithstanding all the fraudulent claims and systematic disinformation, and despite the enormous negative impact of the European and American unilateral coercive economic measures imposed on the Government and people of Syria, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic continues to provide over 80 per cent of the humanitarian assistance reaching its citizens. It is fulfilling all of its responsibilities with respect to shelter, food, transportation, medicine, health, education and energy for its citizens, who are victims of terrorism and of the European and American unilateral coercive economic measures.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 (a), 19, 68 (b) and 69 (a), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative